

# LIBERTARIAN LIFELINE

## “Wussiocracy” on the Hill

by L. Neil Smith

Once again those stumbling morons in the Republican Party have blundered into a manhole, and this time they're going to pull the rest of the country in with them. What they solemnly promised us all last year, in their much-vaunted “Contract with America”, was a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution that would necessitate drastic reductions in federal spending — and at the same time steer well clear of increases in what each of us is forced at metaphorical as well as literal bayonet-point to send the government for the dubious service of curtailing our lives, liberty, and property more and more each year. The budget should be balanced, the Republican consensus seemed to be, but not on the taxpayers' backs.

Their means of assuring this was to have been a revolutionary provision in the amendment requiring a “super majority” of three-fifths — or 60% of the Congress — in order to increase taxes or create new ones. Some joker I was talking with while the argument plodded on in the media (a surprising lack of outraged hysteria on the part of liberals should have given us a premonition), observed that to him, a “super majority” means 100%.

I was inclined to agree, but willing to concede that an additional ten percent represented significant progress — in principle if nothing else — toward the kind of unanimous consent society (or “hyperdemocracy,” as *Time* would end up calling it) we need to become in the 21st century if we wish to survive as a single nation. For that matter, America would be significantly improved if it took two-thirds — or 67% — to pass *any* kind of law at all.

I don't suppose anybody should have been surprised when the Republican “revolutionaries” couldn't quite muster the votes at the last minute and the revolution didn't happen. Call me a cynic, but it was almost certainly never meant to. And the proof, should you require any, is that, instead of simply

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## Would You Like to be on Television?

The Alameda/Contra Costa County Libertarian Party is considering setting

up a television program on the Community Access Channel similar to the one in Sacramento. It tentatively would be called “*The Libertarian Alternative*” unless someone has a more interesting suggestion. The Libertarian Party of California has already realized some of the outreach potential of public access television by means of *An Evening With the Presidents*, a 60-minute videotape produced by the Orange County Region that has aired on cable access channels across the state. While the audience for community access cable television is miniscule compared to the commercial channels, it is nevertheless a market we have never before attempted to reach, and one with great potential.

One of the big problems for the Libertarian Party is that we get absolutely no exposure in the commercial media. When they do mention us (infrequently), it is to make us out to be a bunch of kooks, nuts and weirdos. This would be a way to show a lot of people that we really do have some good alternatives to the conventional parties. If Libertarian ideas were followed, the country and the people would be a lot better off than they are now. We have an opportunity to tell this to the public at very little cost except our own time. It also would be fun to do.

In order to put on the show, we have to do *all* of the work. The cable company only supplies the studio. We would need producers, directors, camera operators, talent, musicians, writers, graphics artists, etc. You don't even have to be a Libertarian to join with the team. Friends, spouses and children are welcome. The cable company will train us in the mechanics of putting on the program, but after that, it is our show.

If you would be interested in being a part of a fun and exciting project like this, give Doug Ohmen a call at (510) 820-0812 or send him a letter at 1220 Greenbrook Drive, Danville, California, 94526. If we get enough interest, we will meet and do some detail planning. We hope to hear from you. □

acknowledging their failure and starting all over again, they adopted some Democrat's bill which—the minute it becomes clear that the budget isn't going to balance in any particular year—gives them AN EXCUSE THEY'LL CLAIM WE WANTED THEM TO HAVE to raise our taxes until the budget is balanced, no matter how much doing that costs each and every one of us, financially or in terms of civil liberties.

In short, what we seem to have gotten instead of the balance budget amendment we demanded, is a “license to kill” for the Internal Revenue Service. There is absolutely nothing about this to be taken lightly, in America's post-Branch Davidian era, at a time when depraved cretins in the Democratic Party have just introduced legislation creating a “Rapid Deployment Force” for the ever-popular Federal Bureau of Investigation—or as they're known in these parts, “Fundamentalist Baby Incinerators.” “Let a hundred Wacos bloom” seems to be the underlying thinking (to the extent there is any) behind a scheme like this.

If I strain your credulity, then meditate upon a friend of mine who was informed a few years ago at a

coin show—by a pair of I.R.S. agents—that his charmingly quaint views about the Constitution were obsolete, and that, in today's America, the tax code takes precedence over the Bill of Rights.

Now contemplate a time, in the not-too-distant future, when Congress is up against it at the end of the year. Americans are hard-pressed, already forking over half of what they earn to federal, state, and local governments, and they're starting to get sullen about it.

“Balance the budget” the Constitution commands, “or you're breaking the law”. Not that any Congressman has ever cared about the Constitution before this, or worried much about breaking the law. But under these circumstances — which is to say, given this excuse, and the precedent currently being established for the F.B.I — it isn't hard to envision them creating an **INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE** to scour the land in tanks, helicopters, and black nylon uniforms, whipping the muzzles of their assault rifles, flame-throwers, and grenade launchers this way and that, night-vision goggles aglow on the lookout for taxable assets.

And all because the budget “must” be balanced, under this idiotic substitute for a decent balanced budget amendment, without any safeguard making it impossible to do that simply by raising taxes.

Damn it, I want my money back — actually, what I want back is my *vote*. Despite my better judgement last November, I voted for two Republicans, and now I'm sorry I didn't just “cast a blank,” since there were no Libertarians running for those offices. I'll certainly never vote for a Republican again. Their “revolution”—just like their courage and dedication to principle—is counterfeit.

Republicans: even when they win, they're losers.

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# Reform Local Telecomm? It's Easier Than You Think!

*By Michael McCarthy*

To the telecommunications companies arm-wrestling over the “deregulation” bill going through Congress, the exact procedure for ending local telephone monopolies is of life-and-death importance. But, as should be clear to all, neither their efforts nor those of the politicians can be expected to result in the best of all possible deregulation bills. After all, the phone companies aren't interested in establishing a real free market in telecommunications, and the politicians don't know the meaning of the words “free market.”

I have some ideas for ending the telephone monopoly that run in somewhat different directions. You should understand my starting points, however. I tend to prefer solutions that are as simple as possible, as quick to implement as possible, and as radical (in the sense of getting us to our goal by the most direct route) as possible. I prefer to deal with the inevitable problems as they arise, rather than engage in elaborate speculation about future market failures.

The main problem I have with the proposal that the Baby Bells be regulated during the transition to a free market is that it's necessarily complicated, which is what gives everybody such ample opportunity to bury weird things in 800-page “deregulation” laws.

Here's one simple reform: End laws that make it illegal to offer telecommunications service. Assert that regulatory agencies cannot regulate any new entrants, period. Keep everything else the same.

Result: If competition arises, then presumably we're better off. Otherwise nothing happens and we can continue arguing over complex deregulation bills. Note that I envision this reform as taking place immediately, with a one-page law.

Some will argue about the dangers of cream-skimming. It's a difficult argument to maintain: it must be based on the premise that some customers who could be serviced cheaply should be obliged to subsidize those who are more expensive to service. This is an odd argument in that it does not exist in most other markets, so it must be argued that this obligation is unique to certain kinds of services, usually ones already monopolized, like local phone and postal service.

Further, it is usually based on arguments analo-

gous to class warfare: rich businesses versus us poor residents, for example. What makes such arguments especially harmful is the fact that poor inner city residents usually share the same beneficial characteristics for such services as inner city businesses do, namely density. In effect, you want the people of inner Oakland to subsidize your service in, say, Pleasanton. This doesn't sound right, does it? Then there's the sweeping assumption that all businesses are rich and can be gouged for generic subsidies pretty much without impact on themselves, their workers, their products, their customers, or the economy, let alone the underlying principles of a free people.

I'd prefer letting services such as postal delivery and telephones be opened to the market and those in expensive service areas be offered telecommunications welfare vouchers. It would be amusing to see the people in Blackhawk lining up at the welfare office for their phone stamps. But I digress.

Here's another radical instant reform proposal: All existing communications infrastructure is treated as common carrier — PacBell has to sell first come/first serve access to its telephone delivery lines. Likewise cable TV franchises. Both could, of course, charge gouging rates, but they offer parallel delivery systems in most communities and thus would instantly be engaged in competition. If this were combined with open entry to telecommunications markets, the competition would be strengthened because the cable companies would love to offer telephone service too.

This reduces the perceived need to spend billions creating parallel infrastructures. Throw in wireless and satellite and there are some real opportunities. (It would also help if you required local governments to license all comers in the cable TV local markets, ending the cable franchise monopoly.)

Will this work? Who knows? By definition, in a free market people are free to follow their dreams and ambitions. If we knew what those were, we wouldn't need a free market—the free market is, in essence, the means we use to find out what works—the best means. So arguments that we don't know what will happen aren't arguments against a market solution, they are arguments in favor of it.

Pre-patching the holes that we fear may arise is awkward, time consuming, and dangerously empowering of bureaucrats.

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Michael E. McCarthy, a resident of Castro Valley and publisher of *SunWorld Online*, is a past editor of the *Libertarian Lifeline*.

# Waco Jury Foreman at Anniversary Memorial

*In follow-up to Doug Ohmen's remarks on the Waco tragedy in last month's newsletter, it seems appropriate to continue the dialogue. The following is an edited transcript of a speech given by Sarah Bain at the Mount Carmel memorial service for the Branch Davidians on April 19, 1995, the Second Anniversary of the final assault. Ms. Bain served as the Jury Foreman at the trial of the Branch Davidian survivors in Federal District Court in San Antonio, Texas.*

Ladies and Gentlemen I am among one of the most frustrated individuals that probably is walking these grounds today. Frustrated, first of all because we are even here. Why did all of this have to happen, and we even have to be here?

In my opinion there ought to be 120 or 150 Branch Davidians carrying on their daily routines, worshipping, whatever their life entailed still ought to be happening out here.

From the jury standpoint, I have found out so much information that we were not presented with during the trial. That makes me not pleased with what has happened to me personally. The sign over here is one of the very things I think must be answered for. [At this point, Ms. Bain pointed to a large sign near the podium reading, "The Black Booted, Black Suited, Black Helmeted, Machine Gun Totin' ATF Gestapo Are Guilty Of Killing Women, Children, and American Citizens."]

When we finally were in our deliberation stages several of us were voicing frustration over the very fact that there were eleven defendants on trial. One of the things that we found some peace, though it now seems to be a false peace, was in saying, "This was just the first step, there will be more to come, the ATF hierarchy surely will be called to answer for what actually took place."

If it had not been for those in control who ordered the raid we wouldn't be here today, there would be no reason to be here, it would be status quo. There were so many things that should never have happened. I've been... If we sat for seven weeks seeing, hearing

wittinesses, seeing evidence, having things... we were bombarded with information, and during that time we would look out across the courtroom and saw the people, supposedly these were the Branch Davidians who had committed these heinous crimes.

And yet at the same time we didn't know these people. We saw one woman, ten men and that's exactly, really, what they were to us, they were not individuals.

It was not until I had the unfortunate opportunity of going back to the courthouse in June for the sentencing phase, that I finally had an opportunity to meet some of the attorneys, some of the survivors, some of the still existing Branch Davidians, that I came to realize more about who the Branch Davidians are, what they represent. And there is nothing, absolutely nothing, I have learned about the Branch Davidians that could ever lead me to believe that they were involved in any kind of conspiracy against our government. Which makes me even more pleased that we came out with a verdict that said they were not guilty of a conspiracy to murder anyone.

All I can see are loving, caring, religious folks who asked for nothing more than to be allowed to carry on with their lives.

When all of this first hit the news media, you're probably very much in remembrance of the fact that some of the things that were being said were that, "Gee, it's a good thing that we stopped this now, because when we got in there, we found these plans that they had, plans of buildings in Waco, and surely they had plans to bomb buildings, or set them on fire, or do horrible things..."

Impossible to believe! When I was going to school over these hills, at Baylor University, I had no idea that there was even a group that was called the Branch Davidians. How such a group could have lived in Waco, and in this area for 35 years, peacefully, and then suddenly turned into a renegade group makes no sense. Anyone with any logic could say that they had no reason to have this thrust upon them.

I am here hoping that, even though I wish we didn't have to be here, something must be done to keep this before the American public, to see that it doesn't happen again, to see that no more children die, and that no more crepe-myrtles have to be planted row on row. Thank you. □

# NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

by Marion McEwen

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I will not be running for re-election or election to any other position in the Party. I want to spend my time on several projects to promote liberty at the local level and so will leave the organizational jobs for those who are better organized. You will be hearing from me as I work toward liberty for our community.

Mainly, I will be working this year with the Terry Savage and Gregory Lyon Congressional campaigns to increase the number of registered Libertarians in our Region. I am also planning to start a public discussion of the evils of government granted monopolies. It is sure to be an eye-opener for the Democrats.

Speaking of Democrats; they are still clinging to the notion that making money is evil. Democrats don't understand that capital (money) is the fuel for the engine which creates business, jobs and housing. Republicans don't think being rich is evil. They just want government to protect their money interests and keep the rest of us from becoming rich. Libertarians aren't envious of "the rich." We just believe that everyone should have the opportunity to make money. I hope to see you in 1996.

## THE COMPASSIONATE PARTY

The Libertarian Party is the only political party to endorse the Compassionate Use Act of 1996. A petition to put this law on the books is included in this newsletter. Yes, when you read it you will find aspects that are not part of the Libertarian Philosophy. Please keep in mind that we do not live in a Libertarian world and can not expect to gain big chunks of liberty all at once. This is a step toward freedom we cannot afford to pass up. When the shouting is over we can press for free market distribution etc.

If you can, please sign the enclosed petition and ask those living in your household (who are registered to vote) to do the same. We would be grateful for your signature and joyful for a few extra. You should get signatures from 80% of the people you ask. This has wide support as you can see from the endorsers. Don't forget to send it in to the address on the petition.

**THANKYOUFORYOURCOMPASSION.**

## ONCE UPON A TIME

In the early part of this century, a poet by the

name of Berton Braley became immensely popular. He was even called the American Kipling. For your enjoyment, here is a poem from his collection *Virtues Inverse: New Deal Ditties*.

## JUST ANTI-SOCIAL

We've loaded him with a lot of taxes  
And rules and codes--but there's something funny;  
In spite of the way his burden waxes  
The son-of-a-gun is making money!

Whenever he's given a boost to trade  
We've taken an extra tribute off it,  
But still the villain is undismayed,  
The son-of-a-gun has shown a Profit!

We grind out daily a brand new grist  
Of regulations by Profs. and scholars,  
But the Rugged Individualist  
Is still producing some surplus dollars!

We've frowned on personal, private gains,  
As most immoral, and due for censure,  
But the son-of-a-gun with Business Brains  
Continues risking some new adventure!

In spite of Planners and New Deal sages  
With Communistical dreams and yearnings,  
This capitalistic guy pays wages,  
And SOME of his stocks and bonds show earnings!

We've moved the bases, and changed the lines,  
And altered the rules for every inning,  
With added penalties, doubled fines,  
But the son-of-a-gun insists on winning!

It's anti-social to fail to fail,  
It makes our wonderful schemes look funny;  
Rush the Traitor at once to jail,  
For the son-of-a-gun is making money!

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# Candidates Struggle for Ballot Positions

Many of you who don't receive the *Libertarian Lifeline* on a regular basis may have been surprised by telephone calls last month from candidates requesting your signature on their nomination petitions.

The Libertarian Party is attempting to persuade the Secretary of State to allow us to nominate our candidates by caucus instead of by the primaries that the Democrat and Republican parties stage at taxpayer expense. Since most of our candidates run unopposed, it strikes us as wasteful that we are forced to participate in the primary elections. The Secretary's own accounts indicate that it costs taxpayers more than a million dollars each election to print up ballots for Libertarian Party candidates, all of whom run unopposed (the LP of California has had only one contested nomination in the past decade).

The Caucus system would allow us to nominate our candidates at our own expense, saving the taxpayers millions of dollars in the long run. This past October, the LPC held caucuses to select our candidates, but since it is expected that the Secretary of State would contest the legality of our decisions, candidates were advised to file their nomination petitions in accordance with the old rules. This requires candidates to collect signatures from registered Libertarian voters to guarantee their position on the ballot.

Collecting these signatures is a daunting task, even when the number is quite small. The list of registered Libertarian voters which we obtain from the Registrar's office is very poorly maintained, many of the names and addresses are incorrect, and most of them do not include phone numbers. The Registrar's office cannot be bothered to perform death clearance matching on their database, so many deceased voters remain on the books. You can see now how easy it is for dead voters to end up casting ballots for Democrats and Republicans!

Candidates are under a very strict timeline to collect these signatures, and if they do not collect the required number, they must pay the difference in cash. If you signed a petition for Greg Lyon, Terry Savage, Bob Gough, George Steffner, Wayne Nygren or Terry Floyd, you have our eternal gratitude. Your signature

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was worth between \$9 and \$13 to these candidates. The effort necessary to obtain these signatures tests the commitment of our activists, particularly since the timing of the March primary required most of the signatures to be collected during the Christmas holidays when many people were out of town.

Thank you for registering to vote as a Libertarian. We are attempting to raise our number of registered voters by persuading more people to register with the LP. Currently, we have less than 0.5% of the total registered voters in California declaring themselves to be libertarian. We believe the actual number of people who believe in libertarian philosophy to be much higher than that figure indicates.

If you registered to vote as a Libertarian simply because you are disgusted with the antics of the Democrats, you are probably a libertarian-leaning person anyway. As the ideological lines continue to blur between the two major parties, it has come to seem as if the Libertarian Party is the more mainstream, despite some of our radical ideas. We believe our party represents the true intent of the founding fathers of our country. To quote Thomas Jefferson, "That government is best which governs least." Libertarians believe we are already quite over-governed by politicians who have overstepped their constitutional power. Libertarians believe free people should be allowed to govern themselves. David Bergland, the LP's candidate for President in 1988 has written, "Where today's politicians are power brokers handing out favors to their cronies at the expense of hard working taxpayers, Libertarians hold that the people in government have one simple job to do: protect the persons, property and rights of the citizens; otherwise, leave them alone."

If you are receiving the *Lifeline* for the first time as a result of signing a candidate's petition, please consider subscribing or becoming more active in the local party. We believe libertarian ideas are practical, sensible, and ultimately necessary if our society is to remain free of the oppression of politicians who believe that *they* are better qualified to run your life than *you* are. If you are alarmed by the actions taken by politicians at City Hall, in Sacramento, or in Washington, DC, you would probably welcome the Libertarian alternative. We would certainly welcome you. □

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# Call for Activists for Local Officer Elections

The East Bay Region LP traditionally elects its officers at the January General Meeting, which will be held this year on Tuesday, January 16, 1996. If you are interested in running for a position, please notify outgoing chair Marion McEwen at (510) 889-9216 and she will include your name on the ballot. Nominations may also be made at the meeting. Positions to be filled include the Region Chair, the county Vice-Chairs, the Secretary-Treasurer, the Executive Committee Representative, and delegates/alternates to the state convention to be held in Long Beach over the long President's Day weekend in February. We are also actively soliciting volunteers to serve as database manager and newsletter editor.

If you've ever thought about becoming more active in the party, this is the time to make your move. If you like what we've been doing and want to propel the party forward through your own efforts, consider running for a local position. If you *don't* like what we've been doing, and believe you could do a much better job, let us know how you feel and step forward to put your ideas into action. We're open to both suggestions *and* criticism.

But be prepared for the responsibilities. The Chair

must coordinate the region's activities throughout the year and delegate tasks to the other officers. The Chair also maintains the party's voice-mail account, regularly updates the recorded messages and answers inquiries left in the mailbox. The Vice-Chairs arrange for meeting space and speaker presentations, coordinate the phone-tree, as well as other duties necessitated by political events. The Secretary-Treasurer maintains the party's finances, pays the bills that are due, and receives disbursements from the State Party Treasurer. The Executive Committee Representative must attend quarterly meetings that alternate between southern California and Northern California locations. In addition, the Exec Com Rep should have access to a computer and e-mail in order to participate in the on-line discussions that precede these meetings and receive immediate alerts when the ExeCom takes action outside of its regular meetings. Delegates and alternates should make plans to attend the state Convention to represent our region during the Bylaws and Platform debates.

The LP needs more volunteers to help spread the work around to be a more effective organization. If more hands are available, less work will need to be done by each individual, more will be accomplished and more of our goals will be achieved. We have a voter registration drive in progress and need all the help we can get. Please do your part to make the LP a success! □

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

*(For those joining the LP)*

*I hereby certify that I do not believe in nor advocate the **initiation** of force as a means of achieving social or political goals.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

### Libertarian Party

**of California**

20993 Foothill Blvd., #318  
Hayward, CA 94541

- ☐ Basic LP Membership  
(includes *California Liberty+ Lifeline*) \$25
- ☐ Household Membership  
(for joint households) \$35
- ☐ National LP Membership  
(add \$20 per person)
- ☐ Subscription only to  
*Libertarian Lifeline* \$10
- ☐ Donation (Thank you!)

Please make checks payable to:  
**Libertarian Party of California**

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS **JANUARY**

**Saturday, January 13, 1996: Congressman Pete Stark's Town Meetings:** Beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the San Leandro Library, Pete Stark will hold another series of his town meetings. At 11:30 a.m., he will appear in Hayward at the City Council Chambers on Foothill Blvd. At 1:00 p.m., he will be at the Fremont Library on Stevenson Blvd., and will wrap up the day at 2:30 p.m. in Milpitas at the City Council Chambers on Calaveras Blvd. LP members will be gathering signatures and registering voters outside these meetings, so please arrive early.

**Tuesday, January 16, 1996: Alameda County LP General Meeting.** This is the most important meeting of the year, since we will be selecting our new Regional Chair, Alameda and Contra Costa County Vice-Chairs, Secretary-Treasurer, Executive Committee Representative, and eight delegates to represent our region at the State Convention in Long Beach (see related article on page 7). Please try to make it to Ricky's Sports Lounge and Steakhouse at 15028 Hesperian Boulevard in San Leandro (near BayFair Mall). Formal business will begin between 7:30 and 8:00 p.m. If you plan to run for an office, please notify Marion McEwen in advance at (510) 889-9216. For more information, please call the LP Party Line at (510) 531-0760.

**Saturday, February 3, 1996: Savage for Congress Strategy Meeting.** 5:00 p.m. at the Round Table Pizza Parlor, 5544 Thornton Ave in Newark (at the Newark Square Shopping Center at the corner of Thornton Avenue and Cedar). Take the Thornton Ave. exit off of 880 and drive West to Cedar Street. For more info, call the Savage Campaign at (408) 262-7161.

**February 16-19, 1996: LPC State Convention.** The annual LPC Convention will be held this year at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on the waterfront in Long Beach, California. Featured speakers include all four declared presidential candidates (Harry Browne, Doug Ohmen, Irwin Schiff and Rick Tompkins) and vice-presidential contender Jo Jorgensen, author J. Neil Schulman, Judge James Gray and many others. For more information, contact Convention Solutions at 3381 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90807 or call (310) 428-8113.

**Sunday Afternoons, 5:30 p.m.: The Libertarian News Hour** is heard every week on Free Radio Berkeley, 104.1 FM, hosted by LP Vice-Chair Jeff Sommer. Tune in from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. every Sunday to hear the latest word from the frontiers of freedom. Free Radio Berkeley is the upstart broadcasting operation that last year challenged the FCC for its right to exist and **won!** To talk to Jeff on the air, call (510) 655-7146.

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